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A changing culture: updating the needs of the community

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

It's always important to have a say in things, and while the happenings in municipalities are often beyond civilian control, every so often, there is an opportunity for some feedback.

Currently, the Cultural Resources Committee is embarking on updating the Municipality of Dysart et al Cultural Plan. Originally developed in 2012, the committee recognizes the need to shift, adapt, and evolve with the ever-changing landscape of 'culture' in the community. "My hope is that updating the plan at this time can ensure it is relevant given all the changes that have happened over the past 13 years," said committee member Heather Reid.

The original plan is available on the township website, and outlines strategic direction around the creative cultural economy, issues of access, expanding youth engagement, strengthening sectoral capacity, and addressing cultural facility needs, to name a few.

"Over the last 13 years, there have been significant changes to the local demographics, tourism patterns, and cultural resources in the Municipality of Dysart et al," opens the survey, available via the Dysart website. "Your responses are one component of the update process. All responses are confidential and will be used solely to help develop the cultural plan update."

Committee member Erin Lynch shared that the revisions to the plan are not in actuality a new plan, but rather, an addendum to the current plan in place. "A cultural plan strengthens local cultural resources and builds a vibrant community," she said. "People want to live and visit a community that has interesting

see AGING page 13

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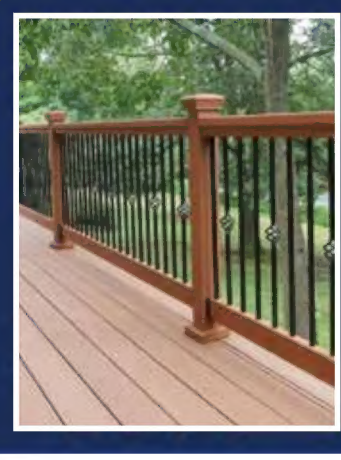

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A floatplane lays overturned in Head Lake after a violent storm swept through Haliburton Village on July 24. /ADAM FRISK staff

Haliburton Village on July 24, destroying multiple tents set up for the Art and Craft Festival at Head Lake Park.

Violent storm rips through Haliburton County

ADAM FRISK

Journalist

A tornado-warned storm swept through Haliburton County last week, toppling trees, overturning aircraft and knocking out power for thousands of hydro customers.

The storm system moved into the area on the evening of July 24, bringing with it violent winds and torrential rain.

Severe thunderstorm watches and warnings were issued Thursday afternoon. As the system approached the region, a tornado warning was issued for the area just before 6:30 p.m. with the weather alert ringing out on cellphones throughout the county.

"Take immediate cover in a basement or interior room if weather threat approaches," read the alert. "Shelter from flying debris if outside."

The warning came as many vendors were setting up tents at Head Lake Park for the Haliburton Art and Craft Festival.

"Most of the destruction happened from the wind, before there was even rain," artist Nicole Gagnon said shortly after the storm. "We had a ton of weight on our booth but it got dragged."

Several tents were picked up by the storm and tossed like ragdolls across the park.

"I could see dust and wind blowing right over and I came around the corner and saw that our booth was gone," artist Sean Olsthoorn said.

Luckily they didn't have artwork already set up in the booth.

"We decided we weren't going to put our art out until tomorrow because we knew of the potential storm," Gagnon explained. "Our tent is all the way over there in the graveyard of tents."

Fortunately, many of the artists who were setting up for the festival were able to seek shelter, preventing anyone from sustaining any injuries.

"We knew it was coming, I got the alert from the federal government, so we thought 'OK here it comes, let's be on alert," said Laurie Jones, curator and executive director of Rails End Gallery and Arts Centre. "That calm before the storm, and when that comes, it was coming fast, we need to get into the gallery."

Jones opened the gallery for the artists and their families to shelter in place as the storm roared through the area.

"We had them come and shelter in the gallery, leave their tents which they were still setting up and then watch their tent get collapsed," she said. "So now we have all their stuff in the gallery drying out."

Several tents were either collapsed or swept away by the storm but thankfully no injuries were reported at Head Lake Park.

"Surprising how fierce it was," Jones said in the wake of the weather event. "And quick. We watched inside as a tent blew up and started banging against the building. That was spectacular."

Jones said the art festival was set to continue as planned and had put a call out for volunteers to help with the clean up and to provide any available tents to help support the festival. However, admittedly she noted that some artists had packed up for the weekend.

On Friday, many residents were seen picking up debris from their property, cutting away broken tree limbs and picking up shingles. By late Sunday afternoon, power was restored to much of the area.

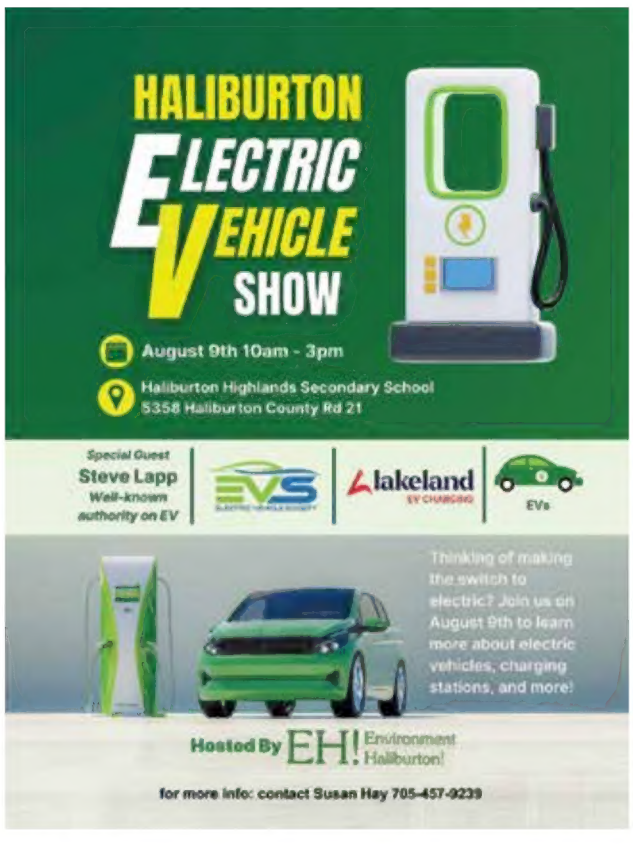
As for the Art and Craft Festival, entrances opened slightly ahead of schedule on Friday with about 1,300 people attending on day one alone.

"It's been great," Jones said Sunday afternoon. "Everyone has been struck with how great this community is and how kind and helpful the people who came on Thursday night to help."

Early estimates put attendance for the three-day festival at more than 4,000 guests attending the annual outdoor event.

A total of five out of the 100 vendors were unable to carry one with the show due to storm damage.

Environment and Climate Change Canada had yet to confirm whether a tornado did in fact touch down in the area.



An artist reacts after a violent storm swept through Haliburton Village on July 24, destroying multiple tents set up for the Art and Craft Festival at Head Lake Park.

A tree fell on Invergordon Road in Minden due to the storm. /THOMAS SMITH Staff

Storm clouds over West Guilford, where the power remained out for the majority of the weekend. /submitted

A rainbow appears after a violent storm swept through Haliburton Village on July 24, destroying multiple tents set up for the Art and Craft Festival at Head Lake Park. /ADAM FRISK staff

The Burden family in West Guilford. /submitted

Remembering Bill, a friend to all

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

The notable trait that stood out when I asked people about Bill Burden, was the tense in which they spoke of him.

While the long-time resident of West Guilford and the heart and soul of their shopping centre passed away in June, his actions didn't seem to be a thing of the past. "He is one of the sweetest men I've ever met," said his daughter, Cori. "And I'm not just saying that because he's my dad."

A slip of the tongue, a momentary lapse. But describing Bill in the present tense tells me one thing: that his personality, his love, his dedication, and his commitment to community care lives on.

And it always will.

William "Bill" Burden grew up in Newfoundland. "So he had that East Coast way to him," Cori laughed. "Always welcoming everyone." He moved to the area as a teenager, before heading to Niagara Falls to work at a winery.

Along the way, Bill met the love of his life, Edna. Don't worry, there's more on their sweet love story later on in the article …

Edna had ties to the Haliburton Highlands, and the young couple knew they wanted to raise a family in a small town, so they made the move to West Guilford with two kids in tow: Cori and Chad. The family lived above the West Guilford Shopping Centre for years.

"We used to joke about it all the time," laughed Cori. "Dad would have us working late in the store. We all worked it as a family."

And it wasn't just his family he employed. "He treated all his staff like family," said Cori. "He always hired local kids. He gave them a chance to get their starts in the community."

One of those local kids was Jaime Bilodeau. "In my teens I worked cutting wild game for Bill and Chad," she chuckled. "By my 20s, Bill trusted me to bake for the store. I was horrible at it. Thankfully he hired my best friend Angie to do that, because she's way better than I ever was. But Bill never let on, he just encouraged me to burn less things."

Bill and his best friend, Dick Schell. "Friends Forever" is what Schell captioned the photo. The two used to call one another every day for years. /submitted

Bilodeau noted that at one point, she was in desperate need of housing. "I was financially strapped and working a billion part time jobs," she recalled, noting that Bill and Edna rented the apartment above the store to her, in an effort to help her out. "He was selfless, he would go above and beyond for his community."

But few knew Bill better than his best friend, Dick Schell.

The two met in 1962, in their Grade 12 year at Haliburton Highlands Secondary School. "We automatically became friends," Schell said. They became attached at the hip. After graduating high school, they both worked at General Motors in Whitby, before Bill moved on to the winery in the Niagara area. But he would continue driving back to the Haliburton Highlands on weekends for visits.

One day, a family friend of Schell's noted that their daughter, Edna (see, I told you we would come back around), was working in the city, but was looking for a ride back to the Highlands on a regular basis. Schell introduced Bill and Edna, who would ride share back and forth between city and country.

By 1970 they were married.

The rest is history. Schell married his sweetheart, Carole Anne, and the two couples became inseparable. Every opportunity they had to be together, they would be. Holidays, family vacations, road trips across the country. "Every day until 2023, Bill would call me every single day of the week," said Schell. "We just wanted to check in on one another. It was just as natural as getting up every day."

In August of 1983, Bill and Edna moved back from the Niagara area to purchase the West Guilford Shopping Centre. Carole Anne still has the date circled on a faded 1983 calendar; written with excitement in green marker. A date they would never forget.

"Bill was as close as any family member I'd ever had," said Schell. "He is family."

Jaime Bilodeau agreed. "Since Bill was the main proprietor for many of us at that end of the county, he was known by many and loved by all," she said. "And he wanted to see us succeed."

By 2023, Bill was up against a series of medical challenges, including a number of strokes and Parkinson's disease. "But really it didn't stop him," said Cori. "He was convinced he would keep going. My dad was many things, including very stubborn," she laughed.

On June 27, Bill passed peacefully at Extendicare in Haliburton, a place where his warmth and care shone through, and the staff treated him like family. At his funeral, over 600 came to pay their respects. "There were so many I didn't know there," said Cori. "People whose lives he touched. So many. And I didn't even realize it."

And while the phone lines now stay silent, the daily phone calls absent between the lifelong friends, Schell says he still feels Bill around. "He's my best friend," he said. "We'll be friends forever."

Because big personalities - the ones fuelled by heart and soul and a deep care that echoes in their bones - are bigger than any life could hold. His personality, his love, his dedication, and his commitment to community care lives on.

So while Bill may be gone, to the community, in many ways, he's still here.

And always will be.

PWHL players take to the ice with Hockey Haven campers

ADAM FRISK
Journalist

Some lucky Haliburton Hockey Haven campers took to the ice last week with a couple of members of the Professional Women's Hockey League (PWHL.)

Toronto Sceptres' Emma Woods and PWHL Vancouver's Emma Greco were on hand when Hockey Haven campers hit the ice at A.J. LaRue Arena on July 21.

"We've had a significant increase in female campers over the years, so we wanted to do something special so we reached out to some PWHL players," Connor Graham, the camp's hockey director, said.

Graham explained that this week alone, 30 of the 70 kids attending the camp are girls.

"We have a week in August where we have more girls attending the camp than boys," he said.

Both Woods and Greco said it was phenomenal to hear about the increase with girls attending Hockey Haven.

"I mean, it's amazing," Woods said. "There's so many girls in our league who do girls hockey camps now and they're selling out and there's waitlists to attend.

"The girls hockey registration numbers are up, like way up, in the last couple of years," the Sceptres forward said.

Woods went on to explain how things have changed for girls in hockey compared to what her early days in the sport were like.

"I grew up in a small town and had to play with boys, but I always thought that it was my normal," she said. "But, like I had to get changed in a first-aid closet but I never really thought twice, I was just a hockey player, I made it work.

"But now, even where I grew up, there's a girls team now and not just girls joining boys teams," Woods said.

Greco, who grew up in Burlington, was fortunate enough to have girls teams already established but never there would be an opportunity to go far with the sport.

"When I was growing up there was never even a thought that I'd be going to play hockey in the states," Greco said. "It's much different now, I would say, with the opportunities and the training."

The PWHL was founded in August 2023, and its inaugural season played in 2024. It began with the "Original Six" teams: Boston, Minnesota, Montreal, New York, Ottawa, and Toronto. Expansion teams Seattle and Vancouver are set to enter the league this year.

"Playing pro for women's hockey is a motivator now, it's a dream" Woods said. "It's what little girls and college girls can look towards, which didn't exist for us."

After signing autographs for the campers who were previously on the ice, the PWHLers laced up and worked with the young hockey players through various drills set out by the Hockey Haven pros.

Toronto Sceptres' Emma Woods and PWHL Vancouver's Emma Greco sign autographs prior to hitting the ice with Haliburton Hockey Haven campers on July 21. /ADAM FRISK staff

PWHL Vancouver's Emma Greco educates a Haliburton Hockey Haven camper.

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It's here

Editorial

Emily Stonehouse

IF THERE'S one thing that stops us in our tracks, it's the weather.

We can be looking forward to the next event, next show, next memory to be made, but suddenly, all plans are out the window.

It's happened to us a number of times this year already. Ice, wind, snow, sleet, droughts, fires, floods.

Does it seem to be occurring more than usual? Maybe. Is it a direct result of climate change? More than likely.

I once read a quote that said: "Climate change will manifest as a series of disasters viewed through phones with footage that gets closer and closer to where you live until you›re the one filming it."

That stuck with me. As a result of the speed in which social media can sound the alarm bells, many of us are experiencing climate change simultaneously, even if it's not in our own backyards.

This urgency can present two dichotomizing realities as we digest the information: either we form a wall of ambivalence while we are desensitized by the onslaught, or, alternatively, a level of empathy is brought to the surface, a warmth around a shared human experience.

Everyone will interpret this differently.

But as we saw yet another storm ravage our community last week, it's apparent that kindness came first. The quick spurt of ferocious winds gobbled up and spit out dozens of tents eagerly set up by artists in Head Lake Park, diligently propping up their booths for the Art and Craft Festival - an event that brings thousands to the county.

Immediately, a call to action was made. Canoe FM took to the air asking for community support and shared tents. By early the next morning, municipal staff were picking up branches through the parking lots, volunteers steadily streaming into the park grounds.

It shakes us, these events. We saw the event happening through our phone, but this time, we were also close enough to drive down and lend a helping hand.

It's not just wildfires in gulping up cities we've never been to, floods decimating towns we've never heard of.

It's here.

I've always thought that the best offense is a good defence.

But we're past that point now. While there are some actions we can do that gradually chip away at the grumbling and groaning elephant in the room that is climate change, the bulk of the problems are not in our hands.

It's not just reusable straws and composting. The decisions around climate change are held in the palms of few; those with more money than most of us could ever fathom, yet choosing the wrong outlets to cache that cash. Filling the voids of their egos instead of the cups held in the hands of our children.

We can try. We can do our part. Little by little. As a community, we can continue to show up when these natural disasters strike. Kindness can come to the forefront. A call to action, a cry for help. We can experience ambivalence or empathy or anything in between.

But above all, we must know that it's a reality. It's here. Ice, wind, snow, sleet, droughts, fires, floods. We must be prepared, for whatever comes next.

Make love not war

Poke, Peel Pair, Ponder

Fay Martin

I THINK IT must be hard to be a man these days, particularly a young man. I wonder why young men as a sector are attracted to right-leaning politics, which was the trend in our recent election as elsewhere in the world. Particularly those we used to call blue-collar workers who for generations were the backbone of left-leaning and labour parties. I get that they feel left-out of progress they have been socialized to believe is theirs by right – secure and well-paying jobs, home ownership, economic security, benefits and pensions. But women are equally disadvantaged generationally, arguably further disadvantaged by gender, and they seem to be trending centre and left electorally.

I wonder if it's because the role of the male in most species is to sire offspring and, in a few species, to ensure their survival by protecting the female. On the farm where I was raised, the long-term value of female over male livestock and fowl was clearly evident, which is maybe why feminism came easily to me. I always suspected that patriarchy was man's way of compensating for this inherent disadvantage. That bias colours my understanding of why the world is lurching toward Strong Man dictatorship and war: both are the play pen – or wrestling ring, if you will – of men seeking to justify their existence.

I recently read the first two of Pat Barker's trilogy about the women of Troy. She continues her lacerating exploration of war from a woman's perspective (the *Regeneration Trilogy*, which deals with the Second World War, is sustaining its relevance) by taking that lens to more ancient, arguably more brutal, war. In theory the Trojan War was initiated by a disagreement about who rightfully owned a woman who was so beautiful men could not be blamed for laying down their lives for her – presumably ten years of war and the prolonged butchery of men of all ages was at base her fault. Women, then as now, were the spoils of war, chattels who were meted out as prizes to the heroes of the day, destined to be bed-slaves to the men who had murdered their sons, their brothers, their fathers, and to ambivalently bear their children. From Barker's perspective, those consequences of war were difficult, but perhaps more easily managed than the consequences of war for men. Why? Because the women could find purpose in life, even as a slave, but a man's career of hand-to-hand, close-up, relentless butchery destroyed their humanity. Their lives, as I understand Barker describing them, are tantamount to manning the killing floor in an abattoir, and trying to wash the stink from their bodies at the end of the day.

Is modern warfare different? I think about what it might be like to be an Israel Defence Force soldier protecting a humanitarian shipment of food from starving children and mothers. Or a Hamas military taking refuge behind the skirts of grandmothers and under the beds of hospital patients. I think it might be even worse than wielding a spear or club like Achilles, because he at least could demonstrate skill and perseverance, and earn the commendation of his fellow fighters. How does an American military person take pride in pushing a button in a subterranean silo in Arizona that pinpoints a drone's designated enemy and blows him and everyone around him to smithereens?

And those are just the wars we follow closely. Are the civil wars that have devastated Africa for decades any more humane? Adam Gopnik, a Canadian, in a recent article in *The New Yorker* (*A Time to Kill,* April 28/25) reconsiders the American Civil War in which fathers and sons, brothers and cousins, faced off against each other across a killing field over, in the end, the abandoned cause of slavery. Gopnik suggests, subtly, that Canadians and their American relatives might face a similar dilemma in the imaginable future.

For what? So that men can feel their existence is justified? We are looking for leadership to usher us away from this brink, and I agree that the face of it is better male, but I also think that the crux of it is female. Women have always led from behind – not solely, but primarily, and perhaps most productively. We raise our sons and nurture our husbands to rise above their testosterone. We teach them to be accountable to the goodness of their natures, not by criticizing every idea they ever had, not by playing Gotcha! with a vengeance, but by bolstering the positive at every opportunity.

I think doubling down on that is the next wave of feminism. Time to put our egos in our jean pockets and do the necessary. It's an odd variation on the 60s mantra of Make Love Not War, but it deserves consideration.

points of view

I'm just Ken

Loon Tales

Steve Galea

"LOOK BIG," I told Jenn. "Show no fear. Whatever you do, don't run."

But when I looked over to give Jenn a reassuring look, she was nowhere to be seen.

That left me alone to face one of the most fearsome creatures on the planet – a four-year-old girl bearing a Barbie Doll.

"Wanna play Barbie with me, Oompah?" My granddaughter Casey said.

"Where's your brother?" I asked, without making eye contact.

Suddenly, I heard scurrying from under the couch. And then I saw a blur running down the stairs towards the basement.

"Come back here you cowards!" I yelled.

Twenty minutes later, Casey and I were still trying to decide whether Barbie should wear the summer dress or the red swimsuit. Don't even get me started about her dogs, Lulu and Broderick.

This was on day five of a six-day visit from my grandkids. The good news was that my toenails were still unpainted. The bad news is I had to sleep sometime.

I have spent around a week a summer with Hudson, my eight-year-old – or, as he says, almost-nine-year-old— grandson for the last four years. But this was the first time with Casey.

Like all four-year-old grandkids, Casey is at the height of her special powers. Just one look from those big eyes along with a well-practiced smile, and next thing you know Oompah is pretending to be a puppy for the next hour – which is fine if you don't mind the constant fetching or rolling over.

It's actually fun for the first five minutes.

Having said that, I don't think enough is written about the subtle fright factor inherent in a four-year-old girl carrying a naked Barbie. The inexperienced among you might say, "Hold it! Four-year-old boys are terrifying too!"

Well, yes. But they are predictable, loud, and basically a blunt object – especially when they run face first into trees, furniture, or random appliances. They'll carry dead things in their back pockets, break things just to see them break, throw rocks at things they shouldn't, have meaningful relationships with: frogs, snakes, and, if you let them, skunks. They'll sprint, jump, or try to juggle expensive things that are fragile that they were told not to touch. But ... they always give you fair warning with sentences like "Oompah, watch this!" or brake-screeching sounds.

Essentially, a four-year-old boy is incapable of sneaking up on anything.

Not so with a four-year-old girl. Four-year-old girls just suddenly appear silhouetted in your peripheral vision. And, though they always look cute, they can be startling, and, in the wrong light, you'd swear you are in one of those horror movies.

Most times this illusion is dispelled, by a beautiful little smile and a request for a hug or a cookie, but sometimes, they can just send a chill down your spine.

If you doubt any of this, watch your cat.

When the little boy enters the room, a cat will scowl, maybe close its ears a bit, possibly assume a defensive posture, but otherwise stay put – unless, of course, the kid is carrying a home-made parachute. When a little girl suddenly appears in the room, however, a cat will turn inside out and almost beat your wife and grandson to the basement.

It's not your granddaughter. They're wonderful.

It's the Barbie.

Is there an important lesson here?

Well, yes. I learned that she looks better in the summer dress, until she goes to the beach party with Lulu and Broderick. Then, it's time for the red swimsuit and the sunglasses …

pic *of the* past

This week's pic of the past was submitted by Wayd Paull of Lindsay, who was born and raised in Haliburton. The picture is of his dad Garnet Paull and his team of horses at the Cooperage. The Cooperage was a local sawmill in Eagle Lake that employed a great number of men from the surrounding area. The photo's believed to be in the late 1940s to early 1950s. /file

Gifts from the garden

Tales from the great Green meadow

Lynda Shadbolt

WE JUST started to use our last braid of garlic from our 2024 harvest. We are always grateful that we can grow enough to last a year. Nothing compares to home grown, organic garlic. At the same time, my husband, Jim, is harvesting our 2025 crop. He pulls it, cleans it and braids it. He gives a lot away to friends and we keep enough for ourselves.

Jim also helps his brother harvest his large crop in Orillia, and the two brothers keep some and sell some. We eat a lot of garlic and I thank the earth that grows it, and the farmer that harvests it every time I peel a clove to make a salad dressing or to start a meal. Mary Oliver, in her *Upstream: Selected Essays* says this: "I would say that there exists a thousand unbreakable links between each of us and everything else, and that our dignity and our chances are one. The farthest star and the mud at our feet are family, and there is no decency or sense in honouring one and not the other."

I love this. All of life matters. We come back to this idea again and again. Of course we get the benefit of the garlic as we eat it every day. But the benefit is actually much bigger.

It is a 10-month project of love that Jim takes on every year. In the fall he prepares the beds for the cloves. He plants them and covers them with straw. In the spring we all monitor the growth of the plants daily. Jim harvests the scapes and we make pesto. In early August he harvests the bulbs and prepares them to be stored for the year, in our home and for our friends. Jim gives his time and energy to the garden and the garlic and in return he gets many gifts of being outside, of digging in the dirt, of watching the birds and listening to them as he digs. He gets lots of time with our dog, who keeps him company whenever he is busy planting or digging. Neighbours often drop by and chat as he works.

My mom and I help him throughout the process. Us and our friends all anticipate the harvest and the gifting of the braids. Maybe one of the biggest gifts we get is that we put down our phones and turn off our computers and spend time outside in all kinds of weather. Undistracted. Present with the earth and the food that it provides. Present with all of life. Jenny Uglow said: "We may think we are nurturing our garden, but of course it's our garden that is really nurturing us." The whole process can be felt as many gifts. We give what we can and in return we receive thanks in many ways. We grow garlic. Others grow lettuce and share. Some drop off salads or muffins. Some make us salsa or pumpkin loaves. It is a gift economy. Maybe that is the biggest gift of all.

The show must go on!

Despite the challenges that arose from a sudden storm on Thursday evening, vendors moved ahead with their booths at the annual Art and Craft show in Head Lake Park. The three-day event saw thousands come into the village over the hot weekend.
/TIM YANO staff photographer

Artist Blake Richardson shares his process for creating. /TIM YANO staff photographer

Red Butt Ceramics shows off their wide variety of mugs and drinking vessels in their booth.

Tsz Ling (Elaine) Yeung, the creator of 20 Jewellery, at her booth at the Art and Craft Festival over the weekend.

Minden Memories

The last run of CNR Train M389 from Lindsay to Haliburton paused at Burnt River Station on September 3, 1960, briefly blocking the main street as it waited to continue north. /Photo courtesy of the Minden Hills Cultural Centre

HALIBURTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Book of the Week

In 1956, Ruth Handler pitches a bold new idea: a doll designed not just to play house, but to inspire girls to dream bigger than ever before.

As Ruth assembles her team of creative rebels she knows they're working against a ticking clock to get this wild idea off the ground.

In the decades to come – through soaring heights and devastating personal lows, public scandals and private tensions – each member of Ruth's team will have to decide how tightly to hold on to their creation. Because Barbie has never been just a doll—she's a legacy.

Let's Call Her Barbie by Renée Rosen is available to borrow from the Haliburton County Public Library.

Schoolhouse pop-up brings history and charm

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

A setting can tell the story.

That's truly what artist April Gates believes.

Nestled into her home and studio in the heart of Gelert, she sits on her front porch as a warm breeze whispers through the branches, her students on lunch break off to the side of the property, sunlight dappling through the wooded canopy.

It's a property where many have made memories.

And it's rich with Haliburton County history.

The property is home to the Donald Schoolhouse, built in 1906. The building has never been moved, and sits on the original footprint, exactly where it was built. The one room schoolhouse welcomed hundreds of children at the turn of the century, before being decommissioned in the 1960s and turned into a church, and later a community centre.

A gathering space for many over the decades.

Gates called the schoolhouse 'home' 10 years ago, after admitting that she swooned over the well-known property between Haliburton and Minden every time she drove past.

Once she settled into the space, it wasn't long before the idea for a pop-up market started to take shape. But it wasn't until the COVID-19 pandemic hit that Gates was able to move ahead with the initiative. "As a living, working artist, so many of our possibilities were cancelled during that time," Gates recalled. "But we could still do outdoor events, and did what we could to offer that safely."

The banner team at the Schoolhouse, ready for another pop-up market this weekend. /submitted

That was six years ago. And back by popular demand, the event has run every year since. Sometimes welcoming returning vendors, and often bringing brand new ones to the community, Gates makes an effort to include anyone aligned with the vision of the small-scale market.

Generally garnering interest from over 400 visitors over the long weekend market, the event is working its way up to signature status. "It was cultivated by being able to adapt," said Gates. "And it brings back the days of the old-timey markets."

Gates will host 10 to 12 vendors on her property, with each offering a different medium or area of interest. With textiles, ceramics, visual artists, jewellery, and more, there's something for everyone.

Even if it's a quick visit to the historic site. "Being the steward to a historical property, it's an ongoing project," noted Gates. "I would love for it to continue to grow."

As for her own artistic journey, Gates shared that her ceramics work is ever-changing and shifting, with the context of her creations built in a space that has shared so many stories. "My work is a constant evolution," she said. "We've become a destination studio, and I've been able to delve into more areas of interest."

On top of her own work as well as hosting the upcoming Schoolhouse market, Gates spends much of her time teaching pottery classes out of the studio, tucked off to the side of her home. What started as some small interest she was receiving from locals has quickly turned into intrigue from across North America, as she welcomes guests from Quebec, B.C., and all across the United States. "They were all just lit up being here," she said. "They just loved the property."

The Schoolhouse pop-up market will take place on Aug. 2 and 3, from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. each day. The event will run rain or shine, but Gates encourages visitors to check out Blackbird Pottery on social media for further updates.

"I would love to develop the property more, and continue to grow here," she said. "It's steeped in so many stories I don't even know yet."

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mvps

With another exciting week of Haliburton's finest soccer coming to a close, these rising young stars are truly finding their rhythm and sharpening many of the fundamental skills of the game, thanks in large part to their dedicated and hard-working volunteer coaches. As footwork, communication, and overall game awareness continue to improve, the pace of the games is picking up and players are learning how to use the full width and length of the field more effectively. After spending a few solid weeks getting to know each team and its unique dynamic, our coaches are now beginning to focus more closely on developing specific skills and offering encouragement that is personalized to each individual player. Parents on the sidelines are proudly noticing not only a growing sense of confidence in their children but also a stronger feeling of camaraderie and team spirit with each passing week. While every game naturally has its ups and downs, the shared experience always ends with laughter, high fives, and big smiles from players, coaches, and cheering families alike.

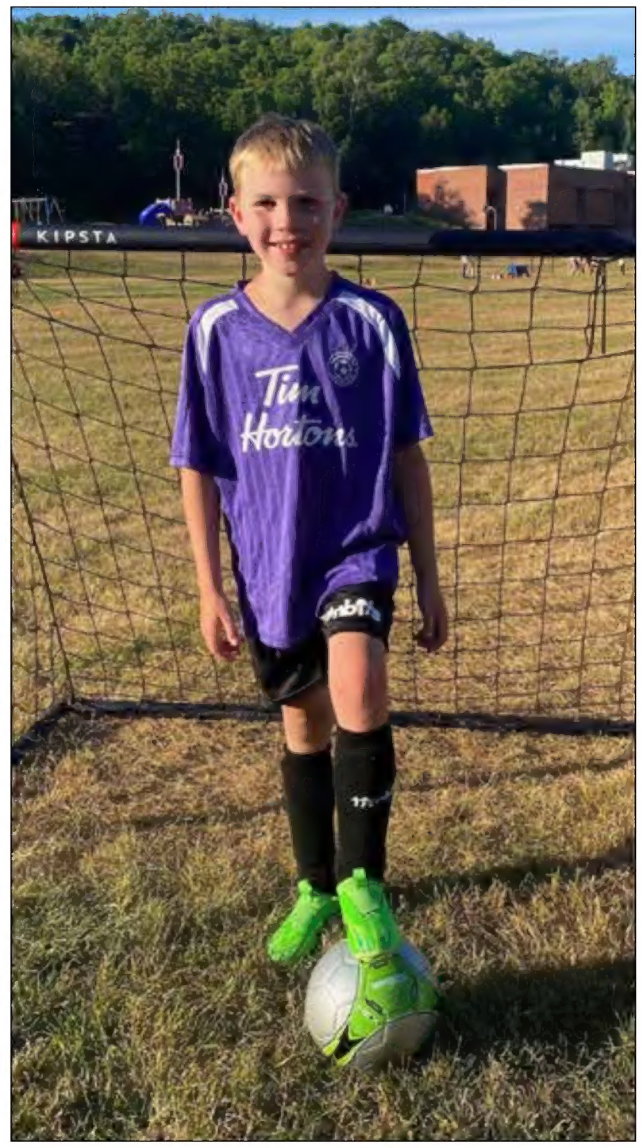
Submitted by Andrew Brown

Boys 10-13 - All Teams

Boys 10-13

Danielle Chambers - Girls 10-11 - White Team

Kenna Coulter, Gemma Fahrun, Veda Stichnothe - Girls 7-9 Silver Team



Ander Brown - Boys 7-9 - Purple Team

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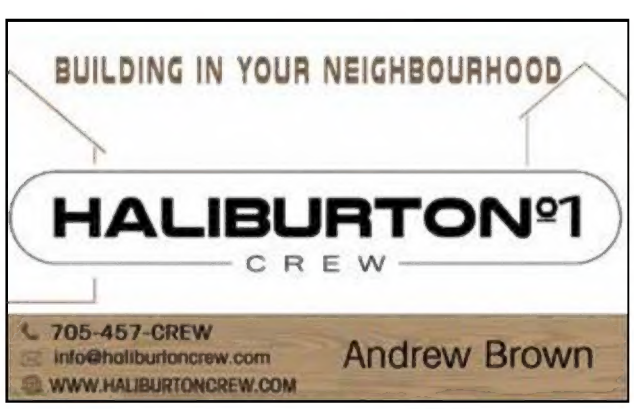

To become a Grassroots Soccer sponsor contact Andrew Brown at andrew@haliburtoncrew.com

MVPs

Aliyah Cox - Girls 10-11 - Navy Team

Elsie Webb - Co-ed 4-6 - Kiwi Team

Noah Barry & Rome Hicks - Boys 7-9 - White Team

Jesse Lowes - White Team

Inga Russell - Girls 7-9 - Purple Team

Connor Cox - Co-ed 4-6 - Teal Team

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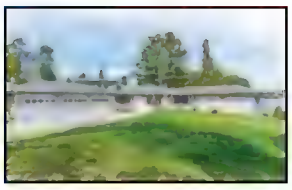

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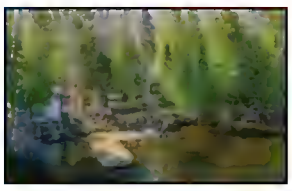
DRAG LAKE $1,186,000



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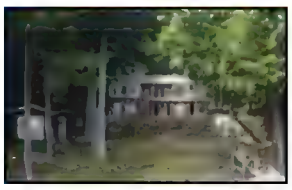

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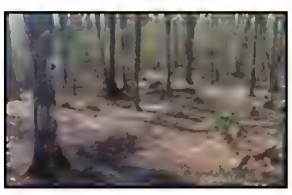

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Council makes decision on two tenders

ADAM FRISK

Journalist

The Municipality of Dysart et al made decisions on two tenders during the July 21 regular council meeting.

McPherson Andrews Contracting was awarded the work for the replacement of two bridges within the municipality, one on Green Lake Road and the other on Barry Line Road.

The contract was awarded for $3,047,933.39 excluding HST and will be funded through the Infrastructure Ontario Loan Program. Council said five bids were received for the work, which came in 19 per cent over estimated budget.

Council had approved the replacement of the Redstone Brook Bridge on Green Lake Road, and Barry's Bridge on Barry's Line Road as part of the 2025 Capital Budget.

Meanwhile, council decided not to award a contract for the building of a new sand storage structure, cancelling the project altogether.

Council had approved the purchase of a sand storage facility as part of the 2025 budget. However, of the three bids the municipality received, two of them were deemed to be further evaluated, but ended up coming in substantially over budget, according to Rob Camelon, director of public works, in a staff report to council.

The staff report recommended that council direct staff to determine other suitable solutions to sand and salt storage and report back at a later date.

County pitches second phase of service delivery review

ADAM FRISK

Journalist

County of Haliburton Chief Administrative Officer Gary Dyke was on hand at the Municipality of Dysart et al general council meeting last week where he pitched the second phase of service delivery review.

According to the county, the primary purpose of the review is to identify ways to improve service delivery methods, streamline operations, and better allocate both human and fiscal resources.

"One of the misconceptions of service reviews is that it's a cost-cutting measure. That's not the basis," Dyke told council on July 22. "It's about quality and the delivery of service and if done properly there will be productivity enhancements and there will be indirect savings.

"It's not about amalgamation, it's not about reorganization, it's about the best way to provide service within the structures we currently have," the county CAO said.

The county began its review in 2022, looking at the 66 services it, and its member townships provide. Phase one of the review identified 12 service areas as "high priority" for potential efficiencies. Six of these; solid waste management, fire services, economic development, bylaw enforcement, procurement, and IT/digital strategy, were addressed in 2022 and 2023, according to the county.

"Under phase one, there was a great deal of success with the implementations that were done at both the county and local level," Dyke said. "There were some challenges like any new program put in place. When you get them in place for 18 to 24 months you're going to get areas that need improvement and modifications going forward."

Phase two will focus on services like engineering, communications, human resources, and planning. The aim is to identify areas where service levels can be increased or modified for greater benefit to local municipalities.

The process will be a collaboration between the county and the lower tier municipalities led by the CAOs. Final reports on recommended service delivery options for the identified areas will be provided to county council and to the local municipal councils in November 2025.

Municipality of Dysart et al

135 Maple Ave., P.O. Box 389,
Haliburton, ON K0M 1S0
Telephone: (705) 457-1740
Email: info@dysartetal.ca
Website: www.dysartetal.ca

NOTICE OF VIRTUAL PUBLIC HEARING
COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT

- **DATE:** Wednesday, August 13th, 2025
- **TIME:** 11:00 am.
- **LOCATION:** The Committee of Adjustment meeting will be held in the Council Chambers and electronically via Zoom. The meeting will be live streamed to YouTube.

APPLICATIONS:

1. D13-MV-2025-016 Madill

   - The following variance is requested to permit an additional dwelling unit to be located in the front yard on a lot in the RR-5 zone:

     a) A variance to Section 3.1(c)(viii) to permit an additional dwelling unit to be located in the front yard.

   - Location: Part Lot 12, Concession 12, Plan 19R-5618, Parts 1 to 3 in the Geographic Township of Dysart, in the Municipality of Dysart et al. Roll No. 013-000-10835 – 12955 Highway 118

FOR MORE INFORMATION about electronic meetings and public participation in an electronic meeting, contact the Secretary-Treasurer at ameijer@dysartetal.ca.

ANY PERSON is entitled to attend the hearing to express his/her views about these applications or may be represented by an agent for that purpose. If you do not attend the hearing the Committee may proceed in your absence, and you will not be entitled to any further notice of the proceedings. The Committee will accept oral and written submissions.

A COPY OF THE DECISION will be sent to the applicant, the agent and to each person who has filed with the Secretary-Treasurer a written request for notice of the decision.

FURTHER INFORMATION: including specific information about the zone provisions affected by each application, and electronic meeting process is available from the Planning and Land Information Department at the Municipal Office by appointment only (8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday) or by phoning 705-457-1740.

Adam Meijer
Secretary-Treasurer, Committee of Adjustment

haliburtonecho.ca

Fire calls up 25% in Dysart et al for month of June

ADAM FRISK
Journalist

The fire department in the Municipality of Dysart et al was busier more than usual for the month of June.

Fire Chief Dan Chumbley presented his monthly report to council on July 22, noting his firefighters responded to 54 calls for service for the past month.

"Just in general our call volume is up and as of the end of June we've been called out 42 times more than we had last year," Chumbley said. "Even though numbers are up, I suspect that will have an effect on our overall finances in the sense for payroll.

"It's the duration of the calls that makes the total difference when it's all said and done," he said.

The fire department has responded to 247 calls for service so far this year, that's compared to the 205 calls for service for the same time last year.

Of the 54 calls for the month of June, the majority of the calls were for medical assistance.

Chumbley also requested two amendments to the fire department bylaw (202563 - Establish and Regulate Fire Department) to include that all of the department's firefighters have been certified to hazardous materials operations level, which allows the department to upgrade to operations level services with the approval of Council.

The other amendment request was to acknowledge that powers have been added, under the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, to allow the fire chief to delegate their authority to another member of the fire department in his or her absence.

Aging population a factor in cultural community changes

from page 1

things to see, do and experience."

She also noted that over the past few years, there has been more awareness around truth and reconciliation with Indigenous history, and that plays a big part in paving the way for the understanding and appreciation of culture as a community. "Culture is not just art galleries and theatres," she said. "It's also recreation, history and so much more."

Reid hopes that by receiving information from municipal residents, it can appropriately shape the ongoing objectives of the community. "Having a plan and a structure in place enables the Dysart community to support grass roots activities, take on novel activities, and the committee creates a pathway to bring ideas to council for consideration," she said.

"There continues to be lots of changes in the community," echoed Lynch. "The population of Dysart et al is growing at pace much faster than the province."

Based on a 2021 census, Dysart et al is expanding at a rate of 14.4 per cent, versus an Ontario average of 5.8 per cent. Lynch also noted that the senior population is continuing to grow, with over 58 per cent of the population clocking in at over 55.

The survey is a series of brief questions, and can be completed on the Dysart website, or by contacting Erin Lynch, the chair of the Cultural Resources Committee, at erin.lynch@flemingcollege.ca or 705-457-0031. The survey is open until Aug. 5.

Municipality of Dysart et al
Tenders

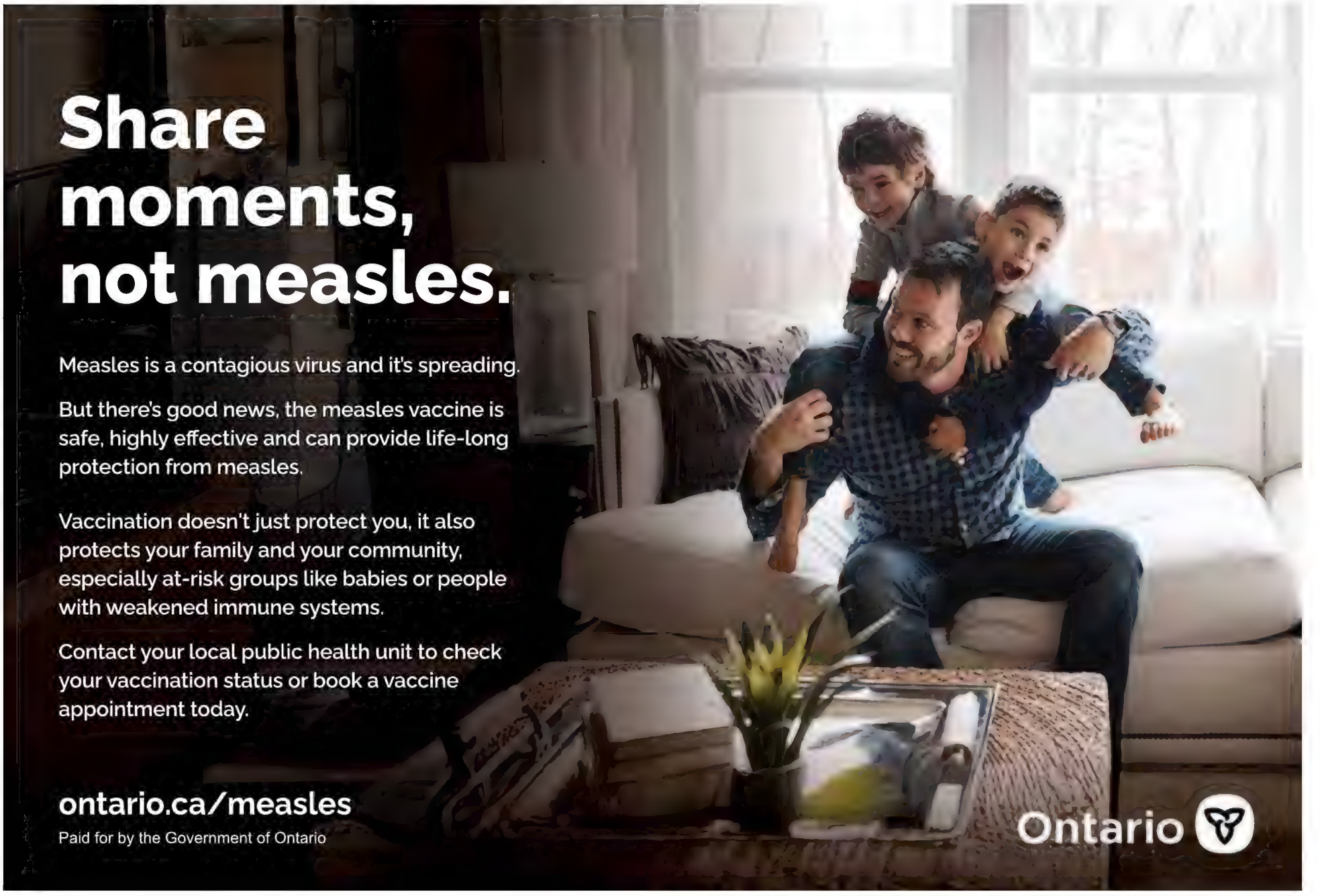
The Municipality of Dysart et al invites vendors to submit bids for any or all tenders:

- **2025-PW-14 Mechanical Brushing on Various Municipal Roads**
  (Closes August 13th, 2025 at 1:00 p.m.)
- **2025-PW-15 Supply of One Tandem Axle Truck with Snowplow Equipment**
  (Closes August 13th, 2025 at 1:00 p.m.)

Register at no cost, view all bid opportunities, and submit your bid online at:
dysartetal.bidsandtenders.ca
Printed or emailed submissions are not accepted

Review our "how-to" guide at
www.dysartetal.ca/bidshowto

Municipality of Dysart et al
705-457-1740 www.dysartetal.ca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Jim Blake: a career of connections and colour

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

We recently had the opportunity to sit down with Jim Blake, and explore his past stories while recollecting his time with HCDC. /submitted

Most people in this community know Jim Blake.

If you don't know him personally, you've likely reaped the benefits of some project he has worked on over the years in the Haliburton Highlands.

There are many.

So many, that when he retired from his work with Haliburton County Development Corporation (HCDC) early in the summer, they hosted "Jim Blake Day" on July 9.

Hundreds showed up. They needed to split it into two sessions; morning and afternoon, with the community all coming together to say one simple phrase to the man who did it all: thank you.

While he's tackled many a project over the years, and the community is quick to sing their praises, Blake primarily likes to keep a low profile. He credits the work to the committees, the volunteers, the organizations he has been a part of.

But on a muggy July day, one of those days that teases at the hints of a thunderstorm to come, I found the perfect recipe to hear his side: hot coffee, an early morning, and a lake.

And finally, Jim shared his stories. A story-teller by nature; armed with coffee and cream to the rim, he asked: "Where should I start?"

"The beginning," I said.

Now let's clear one thing up; Jim Blake had a wealth of stories before he first called Haliburton 'home' many years ago. "My dad was a numbers guy and my mom was a people person," he laughed, citing his parents as the primary reason he is able to see the world through dichotomizing lenses: clear-cut numbers and whimsical colours.

Not many can see both. Generally, the world is divided into two frames of thought; those who apply logic, reason, structure, and rigidity, and those who see swirls of colour, dashes of light, and paint outside the lines. A right and left side of the brain.

Blake uses both, in synonymity. He trained as a visual artist before working at the YWCA, where he had a holistic approach of focusing on the spirit, the mind, and the body. Through the Y, Blake ran camps for kids with learning disabilities across Ontario and the West Coast, with a priority of play on the forefront. When the opportunity came up to build an Adventure Playground in Toronto, Blake worked with a committee to formalize a grant application; one of his first forays into the world of grantwriting, and the politics and policies of project development.

When he arrived in Haliburton seeking a change of scenery and a different pace of life, he started doing consultancy work with Haliburton School of Art and Design. "I was able to do lots of neat projects through that," said Blake, sipping his coffee. "We started doing some big things to make the arts more visible."

Blake's career in Haliburton largely took off from his eagerness to say 'yes' every time a new project crossed his path.

One of these projects was none other than the Sculpture Forest. Now quite literally a world-renowned destination, known for its incredible sculptures and tranquil surroundings, the outdoor art gallery started with a sprout of an idea. Inspired by Grizedale Forest in England, the thought was presented to Blake with the question of "why can't we do this here?"

Using that numbers side of his brain, Blake went to work applying for a grant to get the idea growing. This was prior to his work with HCDC, and he submitted the grant to the organization, seeking financial support for three sculptures. He was successful in his application, and just like that, the seed started to sprout.

The gears were turning in Blake's mind at this point. "I think the arts should be much broader than what they are," he said.

At this point in Haliburton history, the arts weren't necessarily seen as a community economic driver. "There is a difference between economic development and community economic development," noted Blake. "Economic development is the business side, and community development is the social stuff. The softer things. You have to pay attention to the social, the cultural, the environmental stuff. It's all a part of it."

Connections. That's the key. In his brain, in his life, in his community.

The years of Jim Blake's career get a little fuzzy. Not because of age or time, but because of the breadth of accomplishments. He worked with individuals in the community to develop the original Arts Council in 2005; an evolution of an arts committee that previously sat with HCDC. Through the Arts Council, he facilitated the connections between artists of all mediums: music, theatre, visual arts, sculptures, to band together. "It made sense to have an organizing body to bring people together in all the arts," he mused.

Through the Arts Council, talks of Easter Ontario Development Program (EODP) funding could become available, and Blake was tasked with following it. Once again, his eagerness to say 'yes' shone through, and a variety of arts-based programs still stand today because of the seed funding Blake secured through the EODP programs.

Once it was apparent that his heart was in the arts and his mind was built for grantwriting, Blake was a shoe-in for the role of economic development consultant with HCDC. "I was just at the right place at the right time," Blake chuckled. "They could see that the knowledge and skill-set I brought with me was eclectic. And what a great opportunity to learn. To work with the movers of a community."

Connections. That's the key. In his brain, in his life, in his community.

This is the tip of the iceberg. And really, the story was supposed to be about his time with HCDC. How he was a facilitator for countless strategic planning sessions that propelled the organization forward. How he worked with a committee to bring the first fibre internet to Haliburton County, when he noticed the many gaps residents felt. How he supported the creation of cultural plans for each municipality, allowing everyone to feel seen, feel heard, feel understood. How he garnered the idea of a business incubator forward, which now exists as a thriving community hub dedicated to sparking creativity and connection. How he supported organizations such as Point in Time in their grantwriting for the development of the Youth Wellness Hub, a destination that has helped hundreds of youth find their place in the world. How he has worked with innumerable businesses and organizations to secure funding for growth, adding tangible variety, colour, and flavour to our communities.

Whew, that's one long paragraph.

But still, only the tip of the iceberg.

It's all connected.

As our coffees near the bottom of the vintage mugs Blake keeps at his cottage, and the sun that was hiding on the horizon has begun to cascade over the trees above our heads, Blake looked back at his legacy with HCDC. "It's all about who you know," he said. "It's all about the team, the people." He gives a tremendous amount of credit to the staff and board of HCDC, and is excited to watch the next steps take shape for the organization. Blake noted his particular elation around Heather Reid stepping into his former role with the organization. "Heather and I have worked together on lots of initiatives over the years," he said. "She brings a wealth of experience, talent and community knowledge to this role."

And while he has officially retired from his full-time job, the confetti settled from Jim Blake Day, he's not going anywhere anytime soon. He will continue wearing his volunteer hat, as president of the Haliburton County Community Co-operative, co-chair of the U-Links Centre for Community Based Research, curator of the Sculpture Forest, chair of the Glebe Park and museum committee, to name a few. "I always like to ask 'what can I actually do'," he said. "What can I do to make a difference?"

And he has. Fuelled by connections. In his brain, in his life, in his community.

Our coffee now gone, as the sun bakes our shoulders with a hint of a thunderstorm to come, Blake looks out to the lake, ready for the next chapter.

Midnight Madness: sweet treats and tasty traditions

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

It's been a family tradition for decades, and a sure sign of summer.

Haliburton's annual Midnight Madness event is slated for Friday, Aug. 1 this year, and will run from 7 p.m. until 11 p.m."It's a great event," said Brandon Nimigon, the president of the BIA, who hosts the event. "We are really trying to make it a lot bigger, with a lot more businesses involved."

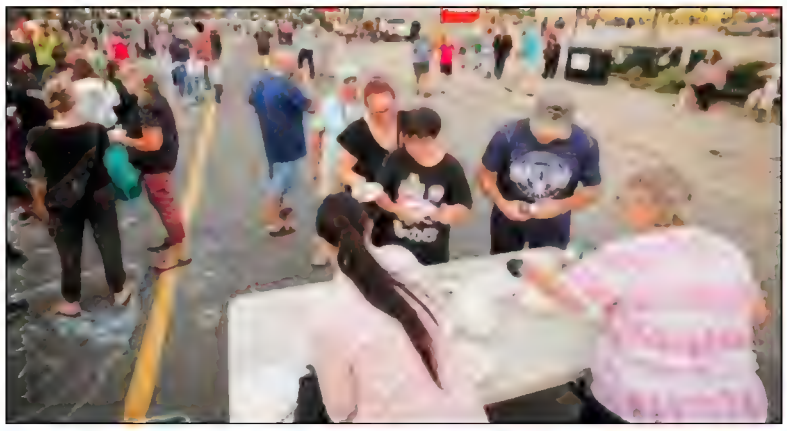
Currently over 120 businesses in Haliburton Village are a part of the business improvement association, a requirement for stores within the catchment area. "Everyone in the BIA is welcome to be a part of Midnight Madness," said Nimigon, "but it's not required."

But for many, it's a huge draw. And has been since its inception in 1982. The event brings in thousands from all over the county and beyond, with many marking their calendars to signify the tradition. Nimigon noted that this year, the typical road closures that have traditionally spanned a block through the downtown core, will be expanded to include a portion of a second block, up past Castle Antiques and Poquito Loco, who will be holding live music sessions.

The BIA will also be offering their annual banana split stand, "which is always a busy line," laughed Nimigon, as well as chalk drawing from Pride in the Highlands, live music from Gord Kidd, and of course, beef on a bun from Haliburton Rotary,

The event also allows businesses to offer discounts and deals to attendees. "It's a really big night for the town," said Nimigon. "Everyone in town is out there."

Midnight Madness 2025 kicks off at 7 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 1 in the heart of Haliburton Village.



People line up to get their hands on free banana splits from the BIA during a past Midnight Madness event. /file

Matt Duchene tournament results

Team and On Course Competition Winners:

1st Low Gross and Overall Winners:
Rob Chapman, Phil Jung, Gary Brohman, Walt McKechnie

1st Low Gross Mixed/Ladies Winners:
Jesse Johnson, Jamie Luck, Glenda Austen, Troy Austen

2nd Low Gross Winners:
Dan Marsden, Dave Marsden, Dan Miller, Kevin Smith

Most Honest Team Winners:
Trisha Bradley, Patrick Bradley, Stacy Tasikas, Greg Tasikas

Women's Longest Drive Winner:
Nicole Baumgartner

Men's Longest Drive Winner:
Owen Flood

Women's Closest to the Pin Winner:
Nicole Baumgartner

Men's Closest to the Pin Winner:
Jim Stewart

Submitted

The overall winners of the Matt Duchene Golf Tournament, held in support of the Haliburton Highlands Health Services, from left, Rob Chapman, Phil Jung, Gary Brohman, Walt McKechnie. /submitted

Navigating the tourism landscape in the county

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

A disciple of Linda Coneybeare, Machenzie Vasey remains Haliburton County's sole travel agent. With starting her position in 2019, Vasey's fortunate maternity leave in 2020 meant that she did not have to weather through the COVID-19 pandemic. With strict travel restrictions, mandatory vaccinations, and uncertainties with travel, the tourism industry took a massive hit during the uncertain chapter.

"It was terrible," said Vasey. "People were afraid to travel."

Vasey says that it was a nightmare scenario for Coneybeare, but the transition post-maternity leave has been rather smooth. Returning to work in 2022, some of her clients had questions, but the fears associated with travelling during the pandemic have seemed to fade away.

Local residents may remember Coneybeare's office in Haliburton. Nowadays, Vasey works as a travel agent entirely from her home.

This year, Vasey says that she has had a large number of clients booking for the winter. She says that the fear of price increases may be an explanation for the early bookings.

In the past, Mexico was the most popular winter destination for people fleeing from the snow. Currently, beaches across Mexico are becoming covered in Sargassum seaweed. The seaweed has benefitted from an influx in nutrients in the Sargasso sea, within the Atlantic ocean. The area in which a majority of the seaweed grows is colloquially referred to as the "Great Atlantic Sargassum belt". Upwelling and nutrient-rich runoff from the Amazon River have combined to become the perfect growing season. While the seaweed is highly beneficial for marine life, it is perfect to house jellyfish and other stinging and biting critters before being washed up on Caribbean resorts. The seaweed cannot hurt you by itself, but does have a highly unpleasant smell as it decays, is considered unsightly by many, and reduces the enjoyability of swimmers.

This year, the warm replacement for Mexico has been Jamaica, says Vasey. While the seaweed is still present in Jamaica, but she says that the volume of seaweed is lesser than in Mexico.

Travel advisories issued by the Canadian Government about Mexico have also played a part in reducing visitors. Advisories warn visitors about violence, organized crime, and kidnappings.

Last year, Mexico was the number one visited county of Vasey's clients. The runner-up was Antigua.

The age of Vasey's clients range greatly. Currently, she is helping a group of women in their 20s plan a trip to Panama. Her oldest clients are in their 80s.

The majority of her clients are from Haliburton County. With the office being located in Haliburton for so many years, customers have continued to return to her, built on their reputation and quality of service. Now running her business from her home, Vasey has received new clientele out of the blue after they had found her services listed online.

> ***"With the ongoing issues with the U.S., in 2025, many Canadians have set an intention to travel locally or within Canada this summer"***
>
> – Kasey Rogerson, Director of Industry Development, OHTO

Vasey's clients come to her to take care of all matters regarding their vacation. All the hotels, day trips, travel, and anything you can think of is taken care of through the travel service.

"It's very time consuming,'" said Vasey.

While a lot of her destinations involve all-inclusive resorts, Vasey is capable of planning any trip imaginable and taking care of any issues that arise. One couple that was taking a cruise missed an Alaskan port of call. Vasey found the service to transport them to the next port. Another couple, who visited Mexico every year, was convinced by Vasey to visit Portugal. With a similar climate and beautiful beaches, the couple now swear by the destination and want to go back every year.

"It is for your peace of mind," said Vasey. "I am here for you before and during your trip."

While she loves all aspects of travelling, destinations have become her favourite trip to plan.

"I love doing destination weddings," said Vasey. "I have done so many that it has kind of become my thing."

Unlike a typical wedding, destination weddings allow your guests to make the event a week (or more) longer experience.

Vasey says that Indonesia is a hidden gem destination.

"There is so much to see and do," said Vasey.

From beaches, to ancient temples, to viewing monkeys, and waterfalls, Vasey highly recommends considering Indonesia for your next vacation. She says that one downside is the connecting flights needed to get into the smaller islands, but with a travel agent, everything would be taken care of for you.

While Vasey specializes in international travel, the Ontario Highlands Tourism Organization (OHTO) says that staycations have remained highly popular for Ontario's tourism industry.

"The appetite for staycations has not diminished since the pandemic - it's grown," said OHTO executive director Nicole Whiting. "This summer many Canadians have committed to remain close to home for their holidays and that has translated into a resurgence in interest in our region as a vacation and daytrip destination. In Ontario's Highlands, we're seeing that interest reflected in real-time digital engagement that translates into more itinerary downloads, more operator referrals, and continued demand for meaningful, local experiences."

Those that were given the opportunity to explore local towns in Ontario such as Haliburton seemed to be repeating their local travels.

"With the ongoing issues with the U.S. in 2025, many Canadians have set an intention to travel locally or within Canada this summer and we have seen that reflected in feedback from accommodators and destinations," said Kasey Rogerson, director of industry development for OHTO.

A recent consumer study conducted by Context Research Group in collaboration with Destination Ontario says that nine out of 10 residents in Ontario have plans for an overnight trip within the province. As for our neighbours to the south, only one out of four Ontarians plan on venturing across the border. Over 80 per cent of respondents to their survey said that they are either neutral or feeling positive about visiting Americans.

One thing is for sure, Haliburton County's hospitality and the beautiful nature continues to bring tourists to the area. While some choose to fly away to warmer climates, you can assure that they always come back home.

SUDOKU SOLUTION

8	9	5	3	1	7	6	4	2
2	7	1	9	6	4	3	8	5
3	6	4	5	2	8	7	9	1
9	5	8	1	4	6	2	3	7
7	3	2	8	5	9	4	1	6
1	4	6	7	3	2	9	5	8
6	2	3	4	8	1	5	7	9
5	1	7	6	9	3	8	2	4
4	8	9	2	7	5	1	6	3

Bring the kids to Head Lake Park for Haliburton Rotary Summerfest

From 4 to 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 5, Head Lake Park in Haliburton will be filled with free games and activities for kids of all ages to enjoy. Once again, local businesses, clubs, and service organizations have partnered with the Rotary Club to create an amazing day of fun for families.

This year's features include two giant inflatables sponsored by Century 21, the Re/Max hot air balloon, animal interactions with Zoo to You and Turtle Guardians, craft animals from Haliburton Home Hardware, activity tables from Point in Time, Nine Square presented by the Bridge, stand up paddle boarding by Algonquin Outfitters, frisbee golf by Abbey Gardens, and so much more.

In addition to all the activities, there will be free cotton candy and popcorn. Free ice cream will also be served starting at 5 p.m. while supplies last. Pockets the Clown will also be in the park doing her elaborate face paintings.

Music in the Park will run from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., starting with local opening act Tom Oliver, followed by Adverse Conditions. All these activities are free to enjoy!

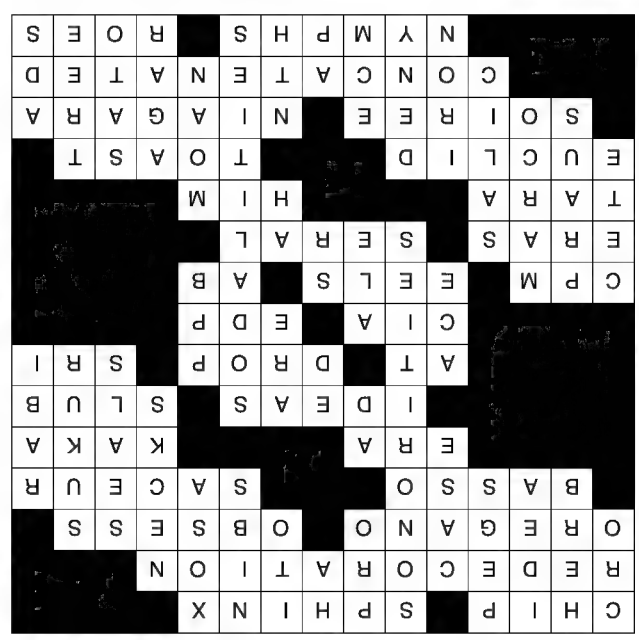
The Rotary Club will be selling its famous Beef on a Bun and hot dogs during the afternoon and evening events till supplies run out. A highlight of the evening will be the annual Rotary Car Draw at 8 p.m. at the band shelter. If you still need tickets, you can get them from a Rotarian, at www.haliburtonrotary.ca, or Glecoff's Family Store.

Don't miss out! This promises to be a fabulous day of free fun brought to you by the Haliburton Rotary Club and local community partners.

For more information, email haliburtonrotary@gmail.com.

Submitted

CROSSWORD ANSWERS



Minden's infamous "shoe tree" pictured on July 24, 2025. /ADAM FRISK staff

Sole searching: 'shoe tree' mystery one step closer to being solved

ADAM FRISK
Journalist

It's been around for decades and has survived harsh winters, ice storms and drought. But its sole purpose still remained a mystery. Until now.

Minden's infamous "shoe tree" has been a popular roadside attraction for visitors to the area for many years but the lore and history of the tree remained unclear, leaving many stumped as to why adorning shoes to a tree is a thing people do and how it came to be in the first place.

"I know almost nothing about it," Kelly Outram, who lives a shoe's throw away from the tree, said in a July 22 interview. "I just know it has been there for over 30 years, at least."

Located on South Lake Road, the tree, at times, can be hard to spot but it seems that it has become some sort of an urban legend with visitors actively seeking it out.

"People are stopping all the time," Outram said. "If I'm just hanging out doing yard work at my house, I hear people pull up to the shoe tree on a regular basis in the summertime. I always think it's someone coming up my driveway.

"But then I look and I'm like 'Oh it's just someone hanging shoes in the shoe tree or taking a picture," he explained.

Hundreds of shoes have been either nailed to the tree or tied together and flung over branches. There's even a wooden board with 10 pairs of shoes nailed to it with a last name painted on it, like a plaque of sorts, hammered into the tree, about 30 feet from the ground.

Outram, who ironically is an arborist, estimates the large white pine to be about 90 years old and to be relatively healthy with all things considered.

"It splits into two stems about 60 feet up and one of them is dead so it's going to fall down and either land in the ditch or on the road one day," he said. "But the other stem is healthy so I hope the tree continues for a long time."

Outram doesn't seem to think the shoes are killing the tree but "they're not great for it."

"People say copper nails can poison a tree but using normal nails, it could be an avenue for disease over time," the arborist said. "But considering the tree is about 90 years old, it hasn't affected it terribly."

As for the lore, the arborist said he doesn't have a clue.

"I feel like it's something quirky someone just started doing and other people, they see it and they're like 'Oh I should do that too, that's neat,'" he said. "It might have been one family with a lot of shoes who started it, making it look like it's a happening situation."

> ***"I feel like it's something quirky someone just started doing and other people, they see it and they're like 'Oh I should do that too, that's neat ..."***
>
> — Kelly Outram

Curious to find out more about the shoe tree mystery, Outram decided to reach out to someone who knows someone who said they know something about the tree. He said he was told that shoes were being tossed or hammered into the tree since 1976 and that there was another shoe tree across the road but people had complained about it.

But why were shoes being tossed into the tree in the first place?

Minden Hills Cultural Centre's Nadine Papp may have the answer.

"So the story I was told years ago was that there was a young child starting school here in Minden, in kindergarten," Papp said. "I think he was a little bit anxious about being away and not necessarily knowing how it all works. So for reassurance his mother decided to hammer a pair of his shoes to a tree to kind of give him a signal that he's getting close to home."

The shoes were meant to act as a marker for the child to get ready to get off the school bus so he wouldn't miss his stop on South Lake, Papp said.

"That's the story that I heard, and it was in the mid '80s," she said. "I may have been told the story in the late '80s though, it was many years ago.

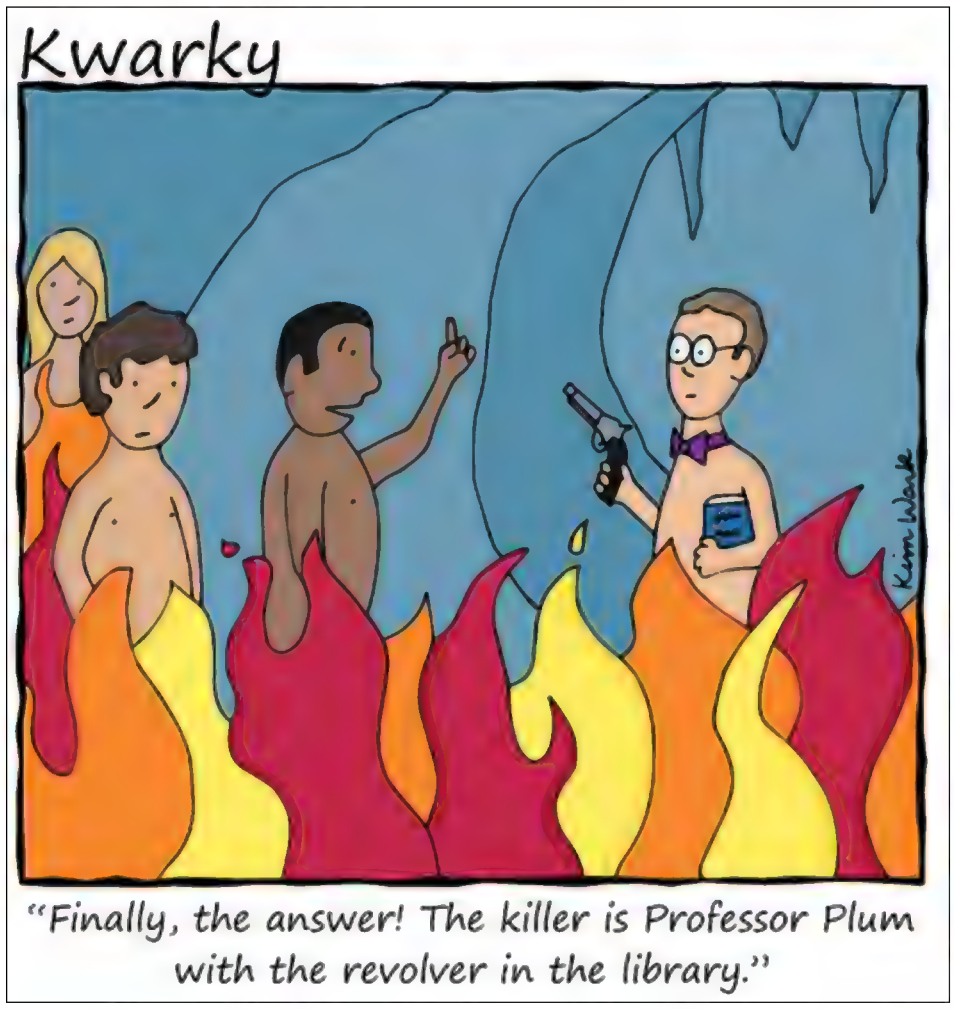
"So that was the story I heard, but I like it though, you know," Papp said.

The county is dotted with similar trees decorated with various footwear but the tree on South Lake Road seems to be the one that attracts the most kicks.

As for the tree being an eyesore for those in the area?

"No, not at all, I think it's neat!" Outram said. "It's like a landmark, it's novel."

Do you have a story to share about the shoe tree or know the lore behind it? Drop me a line at adam@haliburtonpress.com.



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SUDOKU

8				1			4	
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1		6			2		5	
	2				1			
				9				4
	8		2		5		6	3

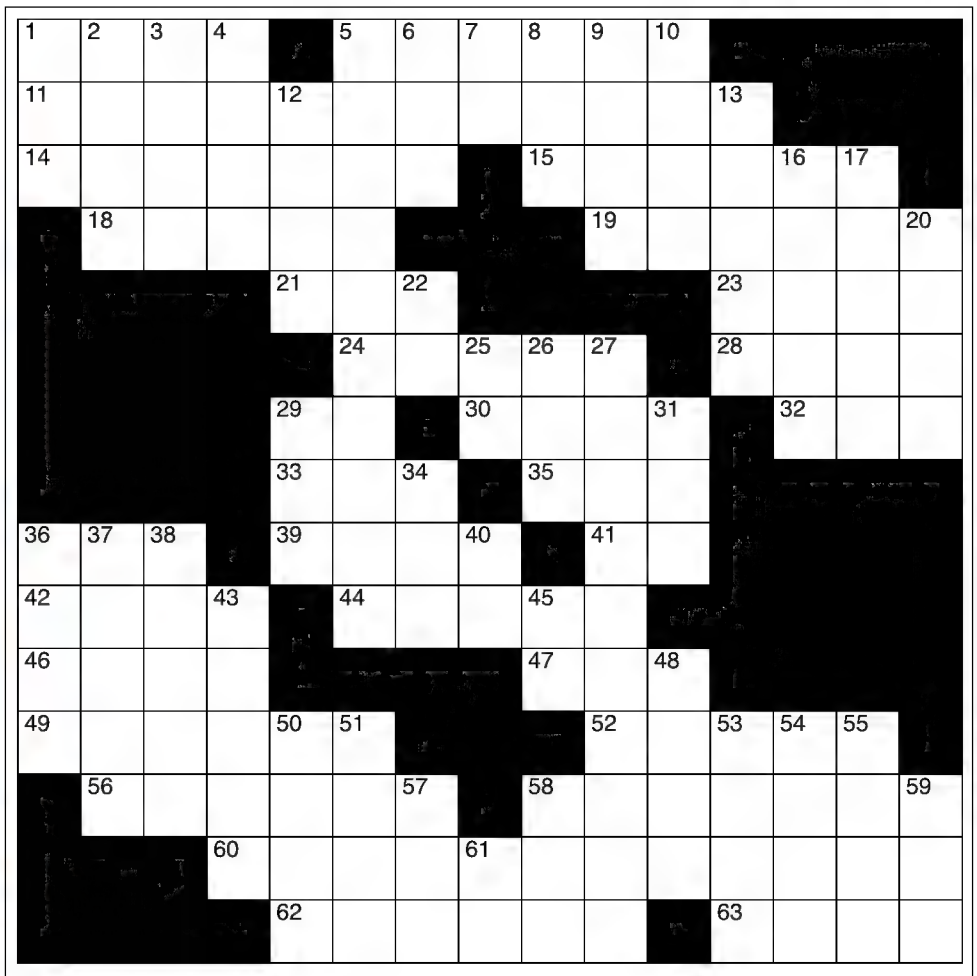
Level: Intermediate

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers on page 16



CLUES ACROSS
1. Popular potato snack
5. Guards the Pyramids
11. Furnish anew
14. Herb
15. Preoccupy the mind continually
18. The lowest adult male singing voice
19. NATO commander (abbr.)
21. A major division of geological time
23. New Zealand parrot
24. Notions
28. Lump in yarn
29. Indicates position
30. Lose hold of
32. Hindu honorific
33. Former OSS
35. Electronic data processing
36. Cost per mile
39. Snake-like fish
41. They start the alphabet
42. Taylor SwiftÕs tour
44. Intermediate ecological stage
46. Scarlett's home
47. Of he
49. Ohio city
52. Breakfast item
56. An evening party
58. __ Falls
60. Linked together
62. Mythological spirits
63. Small Eurasian deer

CLUES DOWN
1. Earliest human form: __-Magnon man
2. Flavoring
3. Notion
4. Bundy and Fenwick are two
5. Qualities of sound
6. One who gets paid
7. Expresses surprise
8. O.J. trial judge
9. Pointed ends of pens
10. Shield bugs genus
12. Container for shipping
13. Upper body parts
16. Closes tightly
17. Nigerian World Heritage Site
20. Volcanic island in Fiji
22. Commercial
25. -__: denotes past
26. They __
27. Confraternities
29. A way to gain a point
31. Parts per billion (abbr.)
34. Brew
36. Badgers group
37. Sailing boat
38. __ Polo, explorer
40. Elder citizen (abbr.)
43. Frankish law code
45. Exclamation of surprise
48. Groan
50. It presses clothing
51. Do not allow
53. Gelatinous substance
54. Common Japanese surname
55. Present in nature
57. Electronic countermeasures
58. Last or greatest in an indefinitely large series
59. Commercials
61. News agency

Answers on page 16

Cheers!

In the last play of the Highlands Summer Festival season, a series of nuns take on the challenge of keeping their monastery open by making wine to sell in the show titled *Drinking Habits*. The hilarious farce of a show runs until Aug. 1 at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion. /TIM YANO staff photographer

Mamma Mia!

The heat was no match for the full crowd that visited Kennisis Lake Marina this past weekend for ABBAMANIA, a show dedicated to the greatest hits of the all-star band, ABBA. The event had attendees on their feet for the duration of the show, with familiar tunes and blasts from the past. /TIM YANO staff photographer

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This position reports to the County of Haliburton Administration Office, Monday - Friday, 8:30am – 4:30pm, 35 hours per week. The 2025 hourly rate for these unionized CUPE 1960 positions is $26.09 and includes participation in the OMERS defined benefit pension program and comprehensive, employer paid extended healthcare benefits.

Visit our website at www.haliburtoncounty.ca/careers for a detailed posting and job description. Forward your resume to shume@haliburtoncounty.ca no later than **4:30pm on August 15, 2025**.

We thank all who apply for this position; however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted. The County of Haliburton is an equal employer. Accommodation can be provided in all steps of the hiring process, please contact Human Resources for further details. In accordance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, the information gathered will be used solely for the purpose of job selection.

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OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory of
Smith (Nee Little)
Hollie Harriett Gwendolyn
(1943-2025)

As the result of infection complications and an aneurysm, Mom passed away on Monday July 14 at LakeRidge Health Oshawa.

Gwen is survived by her children Tyke (Jean) of Haliburton and Konnie Vandeburgt of Oshawa. She was Nana to Hayley, Emily, Alex, Holly, Mike, Ryker, and Carter. Greatgrandma to 10.

She was predeceased by her husband Bertram (2023), her daughter Kimberly (2015), and her son in-law Greg Rowe (2014).

Mom was born in Haliburton on Aug 31,1943 to Holly and Beatrice Little of Blairhampton. She is survived by her sister Marlene Currie (Don deceased) of Stratford and her youngest brother Alex Little (Zetta) Also of Blairhampton.

Predeceased by her siblings Ron, Joan, Darlene, Patricia, and Melville.

Mom found peace and enjoyment in her gardens, her home, and her church. She loved being a Nana, and Greatgrandma, her adoration for her grandchildren was immeasurable. Mom was sharp, witty, and unfaltering making her to be truly one of a kind. She also gained many lifelong friendships through her workplace of 30 years - Whitby Mental Health Hospital and also her place of worship, Whitby Free Methodist Church. She will be fondly remembered by all who were blessed to have known her.

You've earned your wings and I hope you fly high like you had no fear of heights.
Its not goodbye, its until we meet with you again.

Rest in the sweetest Peace
Little Lady
xoxo

Service will be held on Saturday Aug 9th @11am
Whitby Free Methodist Church
1916 Rossland Road East Whitby
Lunch to follow at the Smith family home
In Gwens Garden
All are welcome

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

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FEATURE
DREAM HOUSE
Ferugsons build the perfect place on Drag Lake... see page 19

COUNTY LIFE
Getting the Goods
Popular country band is comiog to the Rodeo

THE HALIBURTON COUNTY
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Adding it all up:

Kennisis Lake tornado damage likely $5-million

by STEPHEN SHAW
Staff Reporter

The tornado that cut a swath through the Highlands last weekend left behind about $5-million damage to the Kennisis Lake alone.

As insurance adjusters tabulated claims reports, damage estimates began pouring into the Disaster Command Base at Kennisis Lake Marina showroom.

"The highest quote I've had so far was for a roof, car and property damages at $28,000," says Bill Elliott, lake association president and emergency relief co-ordinator.

"A lot of people are coming in with damage so extensive that they've just decided to bulldoze their whole area and sell it. A lot of people just don't want the hassle," said one resident.

The trail of destruction was likely the most severe damage in any area of the province, says Brian Donaldson, a municipal affairs senior advisor.

"It really takes you back to see the extent of the tree loss. It was incredible. It looks like a giant lawnmower came along and just cleared everything," says Donaldson, who surveyed the Kennisis and Redstone Lake areas in a plane last week. "In terms of the loss of trees, it's just devastating."

While the three tornadoes that ripped through south-central Ontario left many areas with equally substantial, if not more, structural ruin, the Highlands was likely the hardist hit region overall, he said.

"The damage was much more wide-spread. With the density of tree cover, I don't know how it could compare (to other areas)."

Provincial and municipal leaders are working to secure emergency financial assistance. The devastation in the Kennisis and Redstone Lake areas is unparralleled in the province because of the environmental loss,

See DYSART page 2

HOW NOW SPOTTED COW: Devin Hogg tentatively reaches out to pet a cow at the petting zoo at Stanhope Fun Day on Saturday. His younger brother, Ryan, was less shy, later going right up to the placid bovine. For more pictures of Fun Day, please turn to page 24.

Cuts a necessary evil: Hodgson

by MARTHA PERKINS
Editor

"If the debt keeps growing, we can't sustain any programs"

If Highlanders think the provincial government's spending cuts will be painful, then Chris Hodgson asks them to think of the alternatives.

"It doesn't help Haliburton County if the province of Ontario goes broke," the Conservative MPP said in a telephone interview after Friday's cost-cutting announcements. "If the debt keeps on growing, we can't sustain any programs."

Hodgson echoes many of the themes expressed by Premier Mike Harris and Ernie Eves, the Minister of Finance.

"It's an action plan instead of wringing our hands, which wasn't what we were elected to do. Most people expected us to (make cuts) and get at it," says Hodgson, who is also the new Minister of Natural Resources, Northern Development and Mines. (The Tories say the combined Ministry is one of the ways they're trying to put their own financial house in order.)

Leaving the debt to grow to an estimated $12-billion is "unacceptable..." Spending cuts are necessary because "we hit the tax wall and we can't continue to borrow money."

Right now the province annually pays $8-billion to pay its debt loans. That's $8-billion which isn't filtering through the economy, Hodgson says. "Maybe what we should be doing is saying 'what's the priority and how much money do we have?'"

The finance minister says the province doesn't have much. Revenues are lower than projected by the NDP in the spring, Eves said, and costs are higher. Without cuts, the deficit would be $1.4-billion more than expected. "We have to stop acting as if the problem was one of insufficient revenue."

Some of the cost-cutting initiatives, which total $1.9-billion, include:

- A 22% cut in welfare payments but with protection for seniors and the handicapped. Recipients will be allowed to work part-time so they can make up the difference. Payments will still be 10% higher than the national average, Eves said. In the past, in areas such as Haliburton County where more than 3.5% of the population depends on welfare, the province funded 100% on that portion of the cost instead of the usual 80%. Not any longer. But Eves said counties will recoup those costs through the reduced welfare payments.
- All social services falling under the Ministry of Community and Social Services will get a 2.5% funding cut on October 1, followed by a 5% cut for the next fiscal year.
- Employment equity, which didn't affect many local employers, and the advocacy commission will be scrapped.
- School boards will have to cut a combined $32-million from their budgets but the cuts can not affect classroom education. Colleges must cut $6.8-million and universities $16-million.
- All ministries will review their budgets for further cost savings. There will be other budget announcements in September. "Like all government spending, everything's on the table," Hodgson said.

See CUTS page 2

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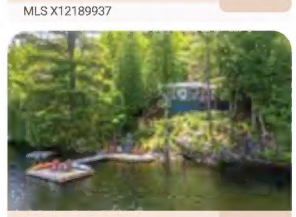
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$659,900
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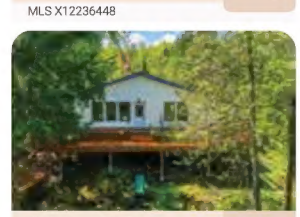
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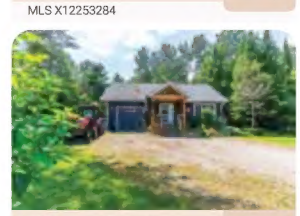
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$417,000
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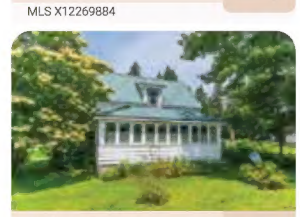
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